



# The Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery

## Raising Standards, Protecting Patients

27 October, 2019

### MEDIA RELEASE

#### 'PARTY SEASON' WARNING

UP to 100,000 Australians are expected to seek cosmetic facial procedures during the upcoming eight-week 'party season' between Melbourne Cup and New Year's Eve, and they are being warned about the dangers of following 'influencers' who may recommend inexperienced and dangerous practitioners.

Latest figures from NSW Fair Trading show there were 287 beauty service complaints in 2017, up from 77 the previous year, a 273 per cent rise. The most common complaint was dissatisfaction with the quality of services<sup>1</sup>.

Influencer recommendations are potentially so dangerous that Instagram has recently tightened the rules on cosmetic surgery posts, including imposing age restrictions<sup>2</sup>.

The Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery (ACCS) today issued a national warning for those seeking botox or dermal fillers to avoid the 'Kardashian effect' and only choose a professional cosmetic practitioner with the right qualifications and experience.

"There is a major misconception in Australia and around the world that botox and dermal fillers are beauty treatments, in the same category as facials," ACCS Medical Dean Dr Ron Feiner said.

"This has been heightened through social media 'influencers' promoting cosmetic procedures on their platforms and providing very little information about the risks associated and where to go to safely receive these treatments.

"There has been a surge of people offering these services in casual settings like shopping malls, at the hairdressers, and even at informal 'botox parties', which adds to the normalisation of procedures and puts patients at real risk of botched procedures."

Dr Feiner said risks from untrained practitioners included tissue death and blindness, which can occur when an artery is blocked by a dermal filler injected in the wrong place and in the wrong way.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/ladocs/inquiries/2476/Final%20Report%20-%20Cosmetic%20Health%20Service%20Complaints%20in%20New%20South%20Wales.PDF>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2019/sep/18/instagram-tightens-rules-on-diet-and-cosmetic-surgery-posts>



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“Cosmetic injectables are medical procedures that carry risks, and these need to be weighed up with the perceived physical and psychological benefits – factors that are not addressed through social media promotions,” he said.

“Before receiving any type of cosmetic injectable, you must have a medical consultation with a doctor so they can consider your medical history and conduct a physical examination.”

Dr Feiner said consumers needed to be protected from dangerous practitioners.

“The public needs protection from untrained, inexperienced, ‘occasional’ practitioners offering cosmetic procedures who do not understand the high-risk areas of the face,” he said.

“Some practitioners undergo a one- or two-day training course only for cosmetic injectables which is inadequate, and in some cases, dangerous.

“The Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery offers a long established and highly respected 18-month cosmetic injectable course for professional medical practitioners, including exams, that can lead to Fellowship of the College.

“This specific training means practitioners can perform with safety and skill. We recommend patients always ask whether their practitioner is a fellow of ACCS, before agreeing to treatment.”

Most popular procedures:

- Botox and dermal fillers (cosmetic injectables) are used by women and men to reduce facial wrinkles and lines. The effects are usually temporary and regular treatments are needed to maintain their effect.
- Fillers and anti-wrinkle injections such as botox and dermal fillers involve injection into the face of a Schedule 4 drug classified under the Poisons Standard.
- Anti-wrinkle injections including dermal fillers are the most popular of all cosmetic procedures, estimated to contribute to 80% of all treatments. Other in demand procedures include laser, IPL, breast augmentation and liposuction.

ACCS is the peak body for both cosmetic medical and surgical procedures in Australia. As part of its mission to improve standards and educate patients, ACCS has published an [online](#) brochure on key issues to consider. A summary can be found below.

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### **About the Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery**

Established in 1999, the Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery (ACCS) is a not-for-profit, multi-disciplinary fellowship-based body of Cosmetic Surgeons, cosmetic physicians, plastic surgeons, general surgeons, maxillofacial surgeons, dermatologists, ear nose and throat surgeons, ophthalmologists and other doctors and health care practitioners who practice in cosmetic medicine and surgery. The primary goal of the ACCS is to ensure the safe provision of cosmetic medicine and cosmetic surgical procedures to the Australian community through the supply of appropriately trained and certified health care practitioners. The ACCS is the only medical college which provides education and training leading to fellowship specifically in cosmetic medicine and surgery. Fellows of the College are medical doctors who have completed post-graduate education and training and demonstrated competency specifically in cosmetic medicine and surgery. To become an ACCS Surgical Fellow, doctors must typically complete a minimum of 12 years of medical and surgical education and training. For additional information about the ACCS, please visit: <http://www.accs.org.au/>

### **COSMETIC INJECTABLES – PATIENT INFORMATION**

#### **DO**

1. *Know cosmetic injectables are a medical procedure, not a beauty treatment. Like all medical procedures, there are risks involved.*
2. *Recognise the law in Australia requires all patients to have a medical consultation with a doctor prior to receiving any cosmetic injectable. At this consultation, your doctor should consider your medical history, allergies, health issues, medication and provide a thorough and realistic analysis of the risks versus the benefits of the procedure.*
3. *Ask if there are any likely complications - what are they and how can they be treated?*
4. *Sign a consent form following the thorough disclosure of risks and side effects.*
5. *Ask if the clinic is registered with the Local Council, as required by law.*
6. *Make sure you are given a contact number for a follow-up appointment. In the event of a medical crisis, does the Clinic have resuscitation expertise and equipment such as a source of medical oxygen and defibrillator?*

#### **DO NOT**

1. *Proceed until you have found out the product being used is TGA approved for use in Australia*
2. *Proceed without asking how long the practitioner has been performing these procedures and whether they belong to an educational society or college with continuing education requirements.*
3. *Drink alcohol 24 hours after treatment.*
4. *Be seduced by vouchers or discounts.*
5. *Proceed until you have checked the medical indemnity of the medical practitioner – this legislation varies from State to State.*